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Brzezinski Praises White House, Urges Reagan-Brezhnev Meeting

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WASHINGTON, June 30 — The new Administration has shown enough toughness toward the Soviet Union to warrant a meeting between President Reagan and Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader, according to Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Mr. Brzezinski, national security adviser to President Carter, suggested in an interview today that a "low-key, consultative meeting would not be harmful." The summit meeting, he said, should be "open-ended on the key issues dividing us."

Among these issues, Mr. Brzezinski said, are the contest to develop and deploy strategic arms, "the prejudicial consequences of the southward Soviet push to the Persian Gulf" and "the mutual benefits of restraint." He indicated that the meeting should not raise unreal expectations and ought to be more of a discussion than an effort to seal agreements.

The time is ripe for a meeting, he said, "if the Soviet Union realizes this country is serious about defense and the Soviet Union understands it has been fashioning an American-European-Japanese-Chinese alliance."

'Needed to Be Said Forcefully'

Mr. Brzezinski, relaxed and in shirt sleeves, spoke at his downtown office in the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, where he is working on a book. He will return to Columbia University in the fall to teach graduate courses, commuting from his home in McLean, Va.

The former adviser to a Democratic White House found little with which to quarrel in the policies pursued by his successors. "On the whole, the Reagan Administration has been right in conveying to the Soviet Union with considerable intensity the absence of restraint and reciprocity in Soviet conduct," he said.

"This needed to be said forcefully, and Reagan has done so."

A missing element, Mr. Brzezinski said, is "a willingness to talk constructively about arms control."

He also said: "I think well of Haig on the whole. He's been a pretty good Secretary of State."

Urged Arms Sales to China

His praise of Alexander M. Haig Jr. was a reminder that Mr. Brzezinski had frequently differed with his Democratic colleague, Cyrus R. Vance, when Mr. Vance was Secretary of State.

One issue on which they split was the advisability of selling arms to China, a policy announced by the new Administration and attacked by Mr. Vance as "needlessly provocative" and "bear baiting."

Mr. Brzezinski said he had not only sought to lift the embargo against such sales to China but was also confident that the Carter Administration was moving in this direction. He said he had won the backing of Harold Brown, who was then Secretary of Defense.

"It is erroneous for the U.S. to boycott an essentially friendly country to benefit an expansionist neighbor," Mr. Brzezinski said. "It is a gratuitous gift to the Soviets, who have not shown excessive concern for our interests." He cited Soviet support for Ethiopia's wars in the Ogaden and Eritrea; backing of Southern Yemen's forays into Yemen; support for Vietnam's installation of the Heng Samrin Government in Cambodia, and, above all, the intervention in Afghanistan, which he said "threatens the Persian Gulf."

Brzezinski Responds to Vance

Mr. Vance recently contended that the announced removal of the embargo destroyed a lever that Washington could use to influence Soviet behavior. Mr. Brzezinski said: "It is not much of a chip if you publicly take the position you won't do it and shouldn't do it. It becomes a chip only if you indicate your willingness to do it."

He suggested that the type of weapons Washington was willing to supply, from the less complex to the sophisticated, could still be used as a device to influence Moscow.

The new policy, he said, is another step in the "development of a shared strategic understanding." He added: "What has emerged in the last two years is the beginning of an important strategic relationship. It must be sustained over a long period of time and must be given more political context." To that end, he urged that Mr. Reagan exchange visits with the new chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, Hu Yaobang, and the country's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, the deputy party chairman.

Mr. Brzezinski would neither confirm nor deny that the Carter Administration had begun this "strategic relationship" by setting up with Peking an electronic intelligence-gathering station inside China to monitor Soviet missile tests. Senior American officials have disclosed that such a station was opened in western China last year.

Mr. Brzezinski dismissed arguments that the growing military ties between Peking and Washington would feed Soviet fears of encirclement. If the Soviet Union moves toward the Persian Gulf and tries to detach Western Europe from the United States, he said, the new ties become "a major counterpoint." "If they are willing to exercise restraint, they have no reason to fear the American-Chinese relationship will be actively exploited against them," he added.